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Effects of field trip on the academic performance of Social Studies students' in Rivers State Nigeria

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Abstract

This study aimed at investigating the effects of field trip on the academic performance of social studies students in Rivers State. A pre-test, post-test quasi experimental design was used. The population of the study consisted of all the Junior Secondary School (Three) Students in 2019-2020 academic session. The sample size was 100 (50 male and 50 female students) selected through simple random sampling techniques that was assigned into experimental and control group. An instrument titled Social Studies Performance Test (SOSPT) designed by the researcher was used. The reliability of the instrument was attained with the use of Cronbach's Alpha index of 0.85 that was considered reliable for the study. Mean and standard deviation were the statistical tool for analyzing the research questions and t-test for the hypotheses. The result of the study revealed that field trip teaching method greater significant on the academic performance of social studies students. The researchers therefore recommended among others that teachers of social studies be encouraged to use field trip method and should also receive further training on the use of field trip method.

Keywords: Academic performance, social studies, standard deviation

Introduction

Generally, the study of social studies in Nigerian schools was seen as a basis for citizenship education as well as for effective participation of individual in the overall contribution to the life of the entire society. As observed by Ejiogu, Nnawuihe and Obiefule (2018) ^[4], social studies is one of the compulsory subjects in Nigeria School system because of its nature as it have numerous benefits to humans ranging from personal, Economic, political, history and societal/group culture.

In support of the above idea, Idu (2011) ^[11] observed that social studies through civic education seeks to expose pupils and students to the tenets and rudiments of effective citizenship and lay strong foundation for ones' active participation.

Bearing in mind the importance of social studies to national development, the subject requires effective teaching and learning process and this cannot relegate the learners' interest and needs. The learners came from one community or the other and from variegated socio-environmental backgrounds. From their differing homes, communities and exposure, they bring their experiences to positively bear what is being taught and learnt and enrich it (Mezieobi, 2017) ^[6].

Unfortunately, most social studies teachers in Nigeria classrooms did not employ values' teaching method in their interactive classroom sessions, let alone use values' evaluating strategies (Mezieobi and Mezieobi 2013) ^[7]. According to Birabil (2014) ^[2], even the best curriculum and the most perfect syllable would remain dead unless transformed to life by teachers utilizing appropriate methods in delivery process.

Again, while some approaches have been in use for many decades, others are just very recent. Some others like lecture and others emphasize cramming and stimulate rote memorization which are fast becoming obsolete or outdated when compared to other innovative teaching method or strategies. In fact, several studies have shown that meaningful learning can hardly be transferred to the learner when the students are not taken outside the classroom to see things for themselves and interest well with the sources of information so received.

Field trip form an important component of teaching and learning. These involve excursion taken outside the classroom for the purpose of making relevant observations and also for

obtaining some specific information. It includes visits to various places, or some exciting places, which can provide learning. According to Gbamanja (2001) [5], excursion, well planned, is meant to broaden students' general knowledge. Field trips is capable of providing good learning together with interest and excitement for the learner. Therefore, since social studies has to do with man's interaction with the environment, the teacher can use field trip method by choosing an exciting place to visit or an exciting topic that will arouse the interest of the students to be pursued out in the field.

However, since the advent of field trip as one of the methods of teaching social studies, research has been able to prove that effective use of some outdoor activities or educational visit to places are fast in facilitating effective teaching and learning. Perhaps, with application of this method, learners will be more involved and developed more interest in the subject. To underscore these points, the present study focuses on the effects of field trip method on the academic performance of social studies students.

Statement of the problem

The introduction of social studies into the Nigerian school curriculum was seen as a welcomed development so as to bring together relevant issues from other social sciences to demonstrate and explain the activities of man in totality, with in his immediate environment as well as to cope with the social vices in the society.

Unfortunately, most social studies teachers often adopt the conventional teaching methods which are teacher centered and subsequently result to poor performances of student in both internal and external examinations. To this end, a lot of doubt has been made among educators about the efficacy of teaching methods and strategies adopted over the years. This informed the need for a more effective and innovative teaching method, possibly the use of field-trip which is more activity oriented which could be more effective in realizing the objective of social studies. Therefore, the problem of this study is to find out the effects of field-trip teaching method on students' academic performance of social studies education in secondary schools.

Purpose of the study

Specifically, the study sought to:

- Determine the effect of field-trip method on academic performance of social studies student.
- Find out the differences in academic performances of male and female social studies having exposed to field-trip method of teaching.

Research questions

- What is the effect of field-trip on students' academic performance in social studies?
- What are the differences in the performances of male and female students in social studies, among those exposed to field-trip method of teaching?

Research hypothesis

Ho1 There will be no significant difference in the academic performance of social studies students' taught with field-trip method of teaching. Ho2 There will be no difference in performance of male and female students in social studies among those taught with field-trip method of teaching.

Methodology

This study adopted a protest-protest group quasi experimental design. According to Nwankwo (2013) [8] quasi experimental design is a study in which some threat to validity cannot be properly controlled because of unavoidable situation associated with the study when human beings are used for experimental study. The population of the study comprised of all junior secondary school (JSS3) students in Tai Local Government Area of Rivers state. As at time of study there were 1150 years 3 student in the public junior secondary school in the area (2019/2020 academic session), The sample size for the study was 100 junior secondary schools three (JSS3) student drawn with the use of simple random sampling techniques, 50 male and 50 females were involved in the study. They were placed into experimental and control group respectively.

The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire titled "Social Studies Performance Test" (SOSPT) developed by the researchers.

The instrument was subjected face and content validity by two experts. The reliability of the instrument was tested using 20 respondents outside the sample size but equivalent in all respect using test-retest method, Cronbach's Alpha reliability method was used and a reliability coefficient of 0.85 was obtained. This was considered adequate for the study. The researchers used two qualified social studies teachers of the above schools for assistant. Mean rating standard deviation were used in analyzing the research questions while t-test were used in analyzing the two hypotheses at 0.05 level of significances.

Results

The sequence of the presentation of the result Obtained in this study is in accordance with the research questions and hypothesis raised to guide the study.

Research question one: What is the effect of field-trip on academic performance of social studies students and those exposed to lecture methods?

Table 1: Mean rating and standard deviation on students' academic performance in social studies

Groups	N	Pre-treatment	Post-treatment	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Students taught with Field-trip method			50	65.7	6.30	81.6	8.14
Students taught with Lecture method			50	63.4	5.80	78.5	

Data from Table 1 above, revealed that students taught using field-trip method had a pre-test mean score of 2.41 with standard deviation of 0.55, and a post-test mean score 2.63 with 0.66 standard deviation. The students taught using Lecture method had a pre-test mean score of 2.45 with a standard deviation of 0.53, and a pre-test mean score of 2.45 with a standard deviation of 0.61. both methods appeared to enhance academic performances of students. However, the post-test mean scores shows that students taught with field-trip had higher level of academic performance in social studies.

Research Question Two: What is the difference in the performance of male and female students in social studies, among those exposed to field-trip method?

Table 2: Mean standard deviation on students’ performance based on gender

Group	N	Pre-treatment		Post-treatment	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Male	50	65.7	6.30	81.6	8.14
Female	50	63.4	5.80	78.5	7.21

Result in Table 2; above shows that male students had a pre-test mean score of 65.7 with a standard deviation of 6.30 while their female counterpart had a pretest mean score of 63.4 with a standard deviation of 5.80 and a post-test mean score of 78.5 with standard deviation of 7.21. Based on the above scores, the male students scored higher than the females in social studies performance test.

Hypothesis One: There will be no significant difference in the academic performances of students exposed to field-trip and those taught with lecture method in social studies.

Table 3: T-test analysis of social studies achievement test in field-trip and lecture method.

Groups	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	df	t-crit	sig level	Decision
Student taught with field-trip method	50	78.2	7.12	3.01	98	1.96	0.05	rejected
Student taught with lecture method	50	65.6	6.82	-	-	-	-	-

Result on Table 3 above revealed that the calculated t-value is 3.01 which is greater than the critical t-value of 1.96 at the degree of freedom of 98 at 0.05 level of significance. This mean that social studies student performed better with field-trip method than lecture method. Therefore, the null by hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis Two: There will be no significant difference in the performance of male and female students in social studies, among those exposed to field-trip method of teaching.

Table 4: T-test analysis in performance test based on gender

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	DF	t-crit	sig level	Decision
Male	50	81.6	8.14	0.75	98	1.96	0.05	accepted
Female	50	78.5	7.21	-	-	-	-	-

Result on Table 4 above shows that the calculated t-value is 0.75 which is less than the critical value of 1.96. This shows that there is no significant difference in the male and female students’ performance in social studies having exposed to field-trip method.

The null hypothesis is therefore accepted.

Discussion

The study investigated the effects of fieldtrip on the academic performance of social studies students in Rivers State, Nigeria. The findings of the study as shown on table 1 and 3 revealed that there is significance difference in the level of academic performance of social studies students exposed to fieldtrip and those of lecture method. The calculated t-value of 2.31 is greater that the critical value of 1.96. This finding is in agreement with the NERC (2010) who found out that fieldtrip improved students’ standardized studies. The study is also in variance with that of Davidson,

Passmore and Anderson (2010)^[10] that conducted a study on learning on zoo fieldtrip and found out that when expectations, planning and preparation were minimal, ultimately, learning was minimal and students perceived the benefits from field trip to be primarily social.

Again, Table 2 and 4 on students exposed to field trip based on gender revealed that there was no significant difference in the male and female academic performance. The calculated t-value of 0.75 was less than the critical value of 1.96. This result confirms the findings of Brown (2018)^[3] that conducted a study on fieldtrip, video technology and students learning outcome in social studies and found no significant influence on gender on student’s performance. The work gained another support Yusuf (2008) who carried out a study on the effect of cooperative instructional strategies on students’ performance in social studies in Ilorin and his hypothesis tested, revealed that there was no significant difference in the performance of male and female students using cooperative instructional strategy in social studies.

Conclusion

The result obtained from the study led to the following conclusions

1. There is no significant difference on the field trip method on students’ academic performance compared to those exposed to lecture method.
2. There is no significant difference of male and female students’ performance in social studies, among those exposed to field trip method of teaching.

Based on the above findings, joint effort by the government, school administrators, teachers, parents, students and NGOs are required to promote field trip in school and to give the subject more recognition as well as balance acceptance at all level of education.

Recommendations

Based on the issues discussed in this paper, the following recommendations are hereby made:

1. Field trip method should be encouraged to be adopted and promoted at all levels of education in Nigeria.
2. Social Studies teachers should be trained on modern method of field trip for improvement.
3. Effective and concrete preparation should be done before the implementation of any field trip.
4. People managing community resources should be encouraged and advised to give better education and create environments that are conducive for undertaking field trip to their resource centres.
5. Curriculum planners should design and incorporate more outdoor activities in social studies at all levels of education.
6. Ministry of education should motivate social studies teachers through the promotion of seminars, workshop and refresher courses for proper use of field trip.

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